SUMMARY REPORT

Skill Shortage Meetings

Ministry of Skills Development and Labour

Prepared January 2003

Executive Summary

The Minister of Skills Development and Labour was instructed by the Premier to develop a human resources strategy for the province that would support economic growth. A fundamental part of achieving that outcome was to provide an opportunity for the business employer community – given their responsibility for recruitment and retention of labour – to help define the nature of the skills shortage problem within British Columbia.

A series of meetings was held between October and December 2002 with representatives of businesses in key industry sectors. The objective was to determine the nature and extent of any such shortages in their business/sector, and to solicit their views as to the role of government in addressing this issue. Sectors involved included:

- Forestry
- Construction
- Technology
- Mining
- Oil and Gas
- Small Business
- Tourism
- Transportation

Through the consultation process, a number of common issues emerged as well as several sector specific concerns. Key outcomes include:

- While several specific occupations were identified as currently being in short supply and/or difficult to recruit, current skills shortages were not generally identified as a critical area of concern.
- Significant concern was expressed across most sectors with respect to looming skills shortages particularly in light of the demographics of British Columbia's population.
- The redesign of the industrial apprenticeship training system must be resolved in a timely manner.
- An apparent disconnect exists between many educators and businesses with respect to the nature of skills required in today's workplace and the range of career options available to youth.

- Leadership and managerial/supervisory skill shortages were identified as a critical issue within firms and in terms of developing community-level connections across sectors and between business and education.
- The role of the private sector in developing and providing education for their employees (in areas such as trades and technical occupations) should be encouraged and supported through mechanisms such as, but not limited to, education tax credits.
- The key role of government should be the establishment of an economic climate that encourages investment through sound fiscal and regulatory regimes. Government also has an important leadership role in facilitating the coming together of various parties to address the skill shortages challenges.
- Ongoing forums for dialogue with individual employers concerning key issues such as skills shortages should be encouraged and continued.

This report will provide sector-specific overviews and provide details as to the nature of the identified outcomes, processes utilized and suggested next steps.

Background

A series of meetings was held with representatives of businesses in key industry sectors to determine to what degree skill shortages currently exist and what their human resource planning strategies indicate for the upcoming years. Most participants were direct employers as opposed to industry associations. A listing of participating organizations by sector is contained in Appendix 1.

Meetings were held in Vancouver, Victoria, Prince George, Surrey and Fort St. John. A listing of specific meeting dates and locations by sector is contained in Appendix 2.

This report will provide an overview of key issues by sector, common issues across sectors and recommendations focused on key policy issues to address the skills shortage issue.

Guide to this report

Each sector report is divided into four sections:

- **Key Facts**
- **Discussion** – general summary of the perspectives among representatives.
- **Current and Suggested Sectoral Action** – this is not meant as a comprehensive overview of actions being taken by sectors or businesses therein. Rather, it's a record of the top-of-mind awareness and opinions of participants – it includes action they're aware of or that they would be interested in pursuing.
- **The Role of Government** – again, this is a record of top-of-mind opinions about what participants would like to see from government.

Sector Overview

Technology

Key Facts:

- Generates 3% of provincial GDP
- Employs 45,000 people directly
- Includes computer and engineering services, information services, pharmaceuticals, advanced manufacturing and aerospace
- 60% of BC's high-tech companies are in the Lower Mainland

Discussion:

This sector is experiencing both expansion and contraction depending on the specific business area. Firms report shortages in highly specialized professional/technical occupations such as Senior Software Engineer, Computer Graphic Artist and Senior Optical Engineers. There is also increasing difficulty in recruiting senior technology executives to British Columbia.

Contributing factors include the shortage of "Centres of Excellence" in British Columbia and compensation levels. Significant efforts are being made, with some success, to attract the best and brightest through the quality of the working environment. Specific professional development and training targets are established by some firms to allow employees to grow and expand their expertise.

Additional areas of concern include:

- Tech transfer – the need for skills in bringing research concepts to the marketplace through the development and implementation of sound and effective business plans.
- Tech visionaries – start-ups, in particular, are having difficulty in finding qualified individuals to sit on their Board of Directors, which is causing such firms to look outside of British Columbia to meet this need. To a degree, some companies are actually moving their operations to other jurisdictions based on the influence of board members from outside the province.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

- Job matching: Some efforts are underway to match available positions within growth areas to individuals from contraction areas to maximize the

possibility of keeping the talent within British Columbia. The online tool to achieve this is being developed, and there is optimism that it will add value to the sector.

- In-house immigration: Companies in this sector are adopting a number of market-based strategies to attract and retain workers. These include developing in-house immigration expertise and strengthening relationships with post-secondary institutions. However, a reality within the sector is that a number of the enterprises are small and do not have in-house human resource expertise.

The Role of Government:

- The implementation of tax credits such as those utilized within Quebec was suggested as a strategy. The special tax status for individuals coming to Quebec to work within the sector is drawing both expertise and investment.
- WCB and Employment Standards were identified as problematic for small tech firms.
- The federal HiTech immigration program only applies to firms employing more than 100 workers. This program should be expanded to give access to smaller firms.
- The lack of recognition by Canadian licensing bodies of external credentials was cited as a problem.
- The Canadian Capital Investment Program did add value and should be reintroduced.
- The government could do a better job of promoting and procuring BC products.
- Setting of standards for training and credentialing, and ensuring they are met, was identified as an additional role for government.

Forestry

Key Facts:

- Wood manufacturing generates approximately 6% of provincial GDP
- Sector employs 91,000 people directly
- Two distinct areas of operation – Coastal and Interior – with different capital investment strategies
- BC produces half of all Canadian softwood

Discussion:

This sector is experiencing different issues depending on the location and nature of the business. Economic and political issues such as the softwood lumber dispute and the cost of fibre are having an impact on operations and, as a result, on labour requirements.

Current skill shortages in key trades areas such as millwright, electricians and heavy duty mechanics were identified. In one example, a firm expended approximately $60,000 to recruit a millwright. "Poaching" from other employers, both from within and external to the sector, is a prevalent strategy utilized to meet skill shortages. The outsourcing of certain tasks is increasing. The use of technology to replace human labour is occurring to a greater degree.

The looming shortages across most occupations were highlighted as a major area of concern. Currently, apprentice positions, posted under the terms of collective agreements, are being acquired by individuals over 50 years of age. The time a firm has to recover their investment in training the apprentice becomes limited. The disincentive for younger workers to pursue a career in the trades is also a factor, as they are not prepared to wait 15 – 20 years to enter an apprenticeship. At an average training cost to an employer of $250,000 per apprentice, return on investment is a major concern. The future of the apprenticeship program in British Columbia was identified as a major area of concern impacting skill shortages.

More broadly, the lack of community infrastructure is identified as a barrier to recruitment and retention in some communities. Few, if any, recreation programs for youth and teens, restriction of healthcare services such as 24-hour emergency care, and limited access to education within the community were all identified as issues. These were particularly problematic in the recruitment and retention of younger workers with families.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

Larger employers within the sector are currently monitoring the demographic composition of their workforce and planning accordingly. Replacement of positions as they become vacant is, in many cases, contingent on capital investment plans and productivity gains, which have not yet been realized to the desired level. This creates some uncertainty regarding future labour needs.

Role of Government:

- The view that government must get out of a prescriptive environment in favour of a more consistent regulatory approach was expressed. Government should create an investment-friendly environment, with regulations that make sense and treat all sectors fairly, and then get out of the way.
- The reintroduction of the Northern Living Allowance and tax incentives for training were identified as specific taxation issues that could assist in addressing the skill shortages issue.
- While there is recognition that multiple government initiatives exist, defining priorities and focusing on programs to address those priorities should be the approach.
- Retraining of forestry workers and a more effective job by government in promoting careers in trades generally – and in forestry specifically – were also suggested as strategies government could employ.

Oil and Gas

Key Facts:

- The value of petroleum and gas products produced in BC is $6.2 billion annually
- Direct employment is fewer than 5,000 but significant support activities generate additional and/or spin off employment
- Commercial operations are all located in Northeast BC
- Strong U.S. demand for Canadian gas will drive future growth within this sector

Discussion:

This sector was divided into exploration, production and transportation segments:

- *Exploration* was characterized as short term but intensive in its labour needs. Casual labour predominates, and the workforce was characterized as being more regional than provincial in nature.
- The *production* side was characterized as more stable employment but with an increase in the use of technology. The shift to new technology brings the requirement for new skill sets. The technology vendors are now providing warranties and servicing, and as such are employing these new skill sets.
- The *transportation* segment entails such activities as pipeline construction and power lines. The workforce is more mobile with high labour

requirements for a fixed period of time. A defined shortage of power line technicians/linemen was identified as a current significant issue.

General concerns that cut across the three segments include:

- Longer-term skill shortages due to workforce demographics. One major firm advised that 50% of all staff is eligible to retire within five years.
- The increasing difficulty in recruiting senior executives and professionals into northern and rural areas. Here in this sector, too, there is difficulty in attracting individuals to serve of boards of directors.
- The lack of satisfactory local infrastructure was cited as a major factor. A key strategy identified in addressing this issue is to become a preferred employer based on the quality of the working environment and career opportunities.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

- The use of internal training is increasing to meet employer needs.
- An apprenticeship program has been reactivated to address shortages in the transportation segment.
- It was suggested that a labour pool concept where employees would work for an association of companies might provide better continuity.

Role of Government:

Economic and public policy concerns were raised as having a current and/or potential impact on firms' ability to attract and retain skilled labour. The uncertainty surrounding land claims was cited as an example. It was noted, however, that there are currently some effective partnerships with aboriginal communities.

Government should create a climate that welcomes business investment but be careful to avoid creating a volatile climate that does not protect investment over the longer term. Making the north a "PST free zone" was a suggested strategy.

Mining

Key Facts:

- Value of metal and mineral production in BC is $3 billion annually
- Direct employment is approximately 18,000

- Diverse sector which includes large-scale metal processing and smelter operations, but also includes small mineral exploration companies
- Rising coal prices have offset declining metal prices

Discussion:

Several current skill shortage areas were identified. They include mechanical and electrical engineers, steam plant operators, and general supervisory and managerial skills. Focus within the sector has been more towards productivity increases than expansion of the workforce. Retirees are generally not being replaced.

More mines are closing in British Columbia than new ones opening due primarily to ore depletion. A series of issues will have an impact on future employment levels and therefore on labour requirements. Land use issues such as parks versus mines, and world price expectations, have an impact on the level of investment.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

As noted above, focus has been primarily on productivity issues rather than workforce issues. However, the amount of in-house training is increasing.

The Role of Government:

It was suggested the role of government include:

- taking a facilitating role between education and business;
- addressing unnecessary restraint of trade practices in the labour market such as artificial entry requirements;
- establishing standards and ongoing monitoring of education;
- resolving inter-provincial issues; and,
- protecting public safety.

Small Business

Key Facts:

- Sector generates 28% of provincial GDP
- 73% of small businesses are service based rather than goods based
- 930,900 people are employed in small business in BC
- BC leads the country in the growth of small businesses over the past decade

Discussion:

While certain specific areas of shortage were identified, the broader concern was with the looming skills shortage issue over the next few years. Workplace expectations of graduating students that are felt by business to be unrealistic are seen as a major area of concern. These expectations include compensation, work hours, scheduling and performance outcomes. It was suggested that there might not be skills shortages for $40 per hour occupations but there certainly is for $15 per hour occupations. Specific areas of current and/or projected shortages include roofers, drywallers, auto mechanics, graphic artists and entrepreneurs.

The concept of "creeping credentialism" was cited as one example as to why certain shortages are projected. The point system in Canadian immigration can serve to exclude qualified individuals in high-demand occupations. The suggestion was made that some form of skills testing be available at certain Canadian embassies. Examples were given of engineers, nurses and other professionals who are driving taxis or working as Nurses Aides – they have qualifications that are in demand but licensing bodies are utilizing criteria that are inflexible.

Some skill shortage issues are the result of staff turnover due to the inability of most small businesses to offer career progression. This is a structural issue within the sector. Other shortages are financially driven such as the tool investment requirement of mechanics of up to $25,000, which cannot be depreciated for tax purposes.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

Companies in this sector are aware of the effect of higher wages in attracting workers, but are often unable to sustain sufficient profit margins if wages increase to any significant degree. Greater attention is focused on working conditions and the working environment, as this has yielded positive and more lasting results than wage increases alone. Small business is more vulnerable to skill shortages because most entrepreneurs aren't equipped to undertake recruitment searches and other human resource activities.

The Role of Government:

The roles of government were defined as raising awareness of opportunities in BC, creating a positive investment climate, rationalizing the process of equivalency in qualifications for foreign trained labour, and finding a solution to over regulation – "create the conditions for success and then get out of the way".

It was suggested that government and the education system could both do a better job of promoting trades as a viable career option for young people. The consensus was that small business does not look to government to do everything but does expect leadership in creating a positive business environment.

Tourism

Key Facts:

- Sector generates approximately 5% of provincial GDP
- 112,000 people are working in tourism jobs in BC
- 58% of tourism establishments are located in the Lower Mainland
- Sector is characterized as a seasonal industry which is significantly impacted by global economics

Discussion:

In these discussions a clear distinction was made between skill gaps and skill shortages. Currently, the sector is experiencing skill gaps but anticipates that in the near future it will have both. Occupations of current and/or future concern include chefs/cooks, room attendants, sales/marketing, managerial/supervisory and human resources.

Suggestions were made that the sector has a recruitment and image problem. Certain occupations are simply not attractive. Whereas new immigrants were historically identified as a ready pool of labour for some occupations, recently even they are not interested in those occupations.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

The sector is seeing an aging workforce and is working in a very competitive marketplace for unskilled and semi-skilled labour. Strategies being utilized include creation of a positive working environment, enhancing individual

business reputations, outsourcing, and looking to compile and adopt "best practices" within the sector.

The reality is that to a certain degree, this is a seasonal/cyclical business and year round employment isn't always available. The focus on seniors as a potential source of such labour is being pursued within the sector.

The Role of Government:

The role of government was characterized as including more marketing of BC. The comparison was drawn to Quebec where nine times the investment is made by government in tourism marketing.

Overhead kills jobs more than anything else, and therefore a reduction in the cost of running a business should be a focus of government. Examples given were the requirement for a privacy officer in the workplace, First Aid attendant requirements pursuant to WCB regulations, and the process of approval for shift schedules pursuant to the Employment Standards Act.

The Community Charter concept was specifically identified as an area of concern. The degree to which room tax revenue could be diverted by municipalities to purposes other than tourism, and the potential for the imposition of road tolls, were cited as examples.

Government and Tourism BC funding has already facilitated a significant degree of human resource planning within this sector. A number of sector members have volunteered their time and expertise in focusing on key human resource issues such as skill shortages. Some of the work done to date includes detailed supply analysis, employment projections, and a detailed industry human resource plan is expected to be complete by March 2003.

Transportation

Key Facts:

- Sector activities generate more than 5% of provincial GDP which is higher than most other provinces
- 107,000 people employed in transportation jobs in BC
- Infrastructure and population patterns significantly impact on this sector

- BC has a wide range of transportation operations including rail, marine, air and road

Discussion:

Participants in this meeting represented a diverse range of transportation modes. Air, marine, rail and road transport perspectives were presented. The concentration of small companies, as well as very large companies, was identified as a factor requiring differing solutions to skill shortage issues.

Occupations such as millwright, electrician and heavy-duty mechanic were identified as currently difficult to recruit. Experienced truck drivers were identified as being difficult to recruit in Greater Vancouver. On Vancouver Island this is less of a problem, in part due to government-funded retraining of forestry workers, many of whom participated in professional driver training programs and acquired their Class 1 drivers license.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

Several specific initiatives are utilized within the sector to generate interest in careers within the sector. The port viewing centre at Vanterm allows for a close-up view of port operations and the range of occupations at work within the port. An aviation career preparation program through the Richmond School District was initiated through the efforts of an aviation company. It has been very successful in attracting students into aviation industry careers.

Other action or suggested action included:

- Several industry and/or sector associations were identified as currently undertaking work to define and address skill shortages.
- Federal employers are subject to Employment Equity legislation and as such are currently utilizing non-traditional sources of labour to meet their requirements.
- Compensation strategies have been implemented to attract and retain certain workers. Higher pay for a trucker driving certain routes is an example.
- Improving the working environment was also identified as a strategy.
- Attempting to balance business requirements with employee family life has been effective in retaining workers.
- The suggestion was made that an apprenticeship program for professional drivers be implemented.

The Role of Government:

The need for a higher priority on infrastructure such as highways was identified as a key focus for government. Poor roadways and increased congestion were cited as having an adverse economic impact on the industry.

The perceived lengthy timelines for government decision-making was also suggested as an area that requires attention. While the number of government regulations wasn't identified as a major issue, the lack of enforcement of those regulations can result in a few poor operators tainting the image of the industry generally.

Border issues were also identified as a problem. The United States and Canada's focus on terrorism is understood, but that focus does not appear to take into consideration the trade impact and the growing adverse impact on businesses that must do more to comply with new regulations.

The need for tax incentives for small businesses to engage apprentices and provide work experience was suggested as a strategy to address skill shortages now and in the future.

Construction

Key Facts:

- Sector generates just over 5% of provincial GDP
- Approximately 120,000 are employed in construction jobs in BC
- 60% of building activity is located in the Lower Mainland
- Very cyclic industry with swings up/down based on levels of available capital
- BC's recent construction activity is largely residential

Discussion:

Significant discussion occurred with respect to whether there really was a skills shortage or an allocation issue involving an increasingly mobile workforce. An example was given that 50% of all unionized tradesmen whose address is Vancouver Island are not working on the Island. As well, while there might be a shortage of plumbers, there isn't a shortage of $40/hour plumbers. It was generally agreed that there is a lack of reliable information within the sector to effectively project the impact of skill shortages.

Certain occupations were identified as currently and/or projected to be in short supply. Drywallers, middle management, human resource, technicians in the service segment of the sector, and the higher-skilled trades were given as examples.

One area of concern identified was that there have been virtually no major capital projects (in excess of $500 million) in BC since Expo 86. Because of the mobility of the construction workforce, labour has gone to where the work can be found.

Current and Suggested Sectoral Action:

- Pursuant to the point above, if BC has major capital projects, it is anticipated that the labour pool will return.
- "Poaching" from other sectors was identified as a recruitment strategy.
- In-house training is being done due to the perception that the education system can't keep pace with industry changes.
- An online recruiting system is being developed as a tool to attract qualified workers into the sector.
- The use of technology in tracking work experience, training and certifications is being considered to maintain up-to-date inventories of qualified workers.

The Role of Government:

- It was suggested that a role for government might be to create an interface to expedite the establishment of the sector's relationship with the aboriginal community.
- The Community Charter was viewed as making already difficult relationships between this sector and municipalities even worse.
- Standard construction documents are no longer used with government.
- BC is the only jurisdiction that doesn't provide a free gas line location service.
- The provincial building code is not applied uniformly across municipalities.
- A partnership with the sector to gather and disseminate information on careers and opportunities within the sector was a suggested strategy.
- Marketing BC as "open for business" will attract investment and workers.

Two Significant Issues Worthy of Special Comment

1. Apprenticeship Training

The need to resolve the redesign of the industry/apprenticeship training system permeated discussions with most sectors. The uncertainty in this regard is causing some firms to not hire apprentices and others to reduce their numbers. Given the frequency by which trades/technical occupations were identified as being and/or projected to be in short supply, an immediate resolution to this issue appears needed.

2. Business Leadership

A second area that has the potential to significantly undermine economic growth is the diminishing supply of business visionaries, leaders, managers and supervisors/ superintendents. These areas of higher business acumen were raised in a number of sectors as being a significant emerging issue. The most qualified workforce still needs to be led, directed and utilized in the most effective manner possible. The business entity must grow and prosper in order to employ labour. Many of the solutions identified by employers will require greater industry collaboration and leadership. This is particularly important in a climate of greater local autonomy and decision-making.

Perspectives on the BC Education System

The topic of BC's education (public, post-secondary and private), training and apprenticeship systems was discussed at great length in all sector meetings. For the purpose of this report, participants' top-of-mind comments have been broken out into the following areas:

Relations with post-secondary institutions

- Relations between business and post-sec range from fairly positive (high-tech) to poor. The oil and gas sector, for example, stated that it has far better working partnerships with Alberta institutions, which it finds to be more responsive to industry needs.

Education/Business "Disconnect"

- More than one sector spoke of this disconnect, particularly around the choice, delivery and responsiveness of education programs.
- Many spoke of the slowness of post-secondary programs to respond to the skill requirements of industry.
- At the public school level, they advocated better links between high school career counsellors and business.

- They also spoke of the need to ensure parents are better informed – and earlier – about the career options available to their kids.

Post-Secondary Programs

- Even among the high-tech participants (which reported positive relations with education providers), there was still a feeling that programs are insufficient. In the case of high-tech, the concern was a lack of seats in university programs.
- Concerns were also expressed more broadly about:
    - The lag time for new programs, specifically that the Education Council mechanism at colleges can lead to lengthy delays.
    - Programs involving technical training not being current enough.
    - The lack of direct/relevant industry experience among program instructors.
    - Wait times to enter programs – the construction industry participants indicated there is a two-year wait for youth going into programs.

Private Institutions

- A concern was raised regarding the lack of quality control for programs and outcomes at private institutions.

Apprenticeships

- There is high expectation regarding the new model of industry/apprenticeship training and its speedy implementation.
- Again, there is the feeling that the program content, instructional staff and technology is not up-to-date with industry demands.

Public School System

- There is a belief that the public school system is not good at identifying non-university options for students.
- Also, some participants believe there should be a greater emphasis placed on math, science and technology.

System Fragmentation

- There is a belief that the K-12 system is not dialoguing with colleges and universities.
- It was also stated that K-12, colleges, and universities appear to be functioning as isolated "silos", with little coordination – and that this is a major factor contributing to current and future skill shortages.
- It was also stated that the "system" should take better advantage of the knowledge and skill of recent retirees, perhaps not in a purely instructional role but as mentors and advisors to students.

Next Steps

This report will be distributed to each individual who participated in the sector meetings. Their feedback and suggestions will be solicited and considered.

The report will also be placed on the Ministry of Skills Development and Labour website where additional comments will be sought. The report and subsequent comments will be integrated into an overall human resource planning strategy that will also draw from various data sources and other ministry service plans and commitments across government.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF PARTCIPATING ORGANIZATIONS BY SECTOR

Technology

Kinetek Pharmaceuticals Inc

J.A. Rutherford & Associates
Electronic Arts (Canada) Inc

Westport Innovations Inc

MacDonald Dettwiler
Crystal Decisions Corp
Silent Witness
VIATec

Tourism

Accent Inns

Royal London wax Museum
Admirality Inn
Destinations

Small Business

Canada Foundation for International Development

Surrey Chamber of Commerce
Sylvan Learning Centre
Accuron Construction
Integrity Parts Dealers
Canada Middle East Trade
FINCON Services Inc
Thornley Advertising
Flag Chevrolet Oldsmobile Ltd

Mining

Teck Cominco Ltd

Forestry

Howe Sound Pulp and Paper

Riverside Forest Products Ltd
Tembec Forest Products
Interior Forest Labour Relations Association

Weldwood of Canada Ltd
Weyerhauser
Slocan Forest Products
PG Mill Supplies Ltd
Prince George Chamber of Commerce
Abitibi Consolidated Inc
Dunkley Lumber Ltd
Council on Northern Interior Forest Employment Relations
Canfor

Construction

BC Construction Association

Mechanical Contractors Association
Independent Contractors and Business Association
Xpert Mechanical
Construction Association of Victoria
BC Comfort Air Conditioning Ltd
Vancouver Regional Construction Association

Oil and Gas

Aquila Networks Canada

Duke Energy
Foothills Pipe Lines ltd
BC Gas
Sci-Tech North
EnCana
North Peace Economic Development Commission
Northern Society of Oilfield Contractors and Service Firms

Transportation

Air Canada

Marpole Transport Ltd.
Bandstra Transportation Systems
Prince Rupert Grain Ltd.
Port of Vancouver
Neptune Bulk Terminals Ltd.

Other Participants

The following individuals participated in each sector meeting,

Ministry of Skills Development and Labour;
Betty Notar, Assistant Deputy Minister
Janice Mansfield, Special Advisor, Skills

Facilitator;
David J. Annis

Project Advisory Committee

Doug Alley, BC Business Council
Suromitra Sanatani, Canadian Federation of Independent Business
John Winter, BC Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX 2

MEETING SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS

Date	Sector	Location
October 21	High-Tech	Vancouver
October 22	Forestry	Prince George
November 1	Small Business	Surrey
November 4	Construction	Vancouver
November 5	Tourism	Victoria
November 6	Forestry	Vancouver
November 8	Mining	Vancouver
November 22	Oil and Gas	Vancouver
November 26	Oil & Gas	Ft. St. John
December 13	Transportation	Vancouver
January 24	Heavy Industry Trades Advisory Council	Vancouver